

MINUTES

DAKOTA COUNTY PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

July 27, 2010

14955 Galaxie Avenue, Conference Room L139, Apple Valley, Minnesota

1. CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

Commissioner Paul Krause, Chair of the Physical Development Committee of the Whole, called the meeting to order at 10:15 a.m. Commissioners in attendance:

Commissioner Joseph A. Harris, District 1
 Commissioner Kathleen Gaylord, District 2
 Commissioner Thomas Egan, District 3
 Commissioner Nancy Schouweiler, District 4
 Commissioner Liz Workman, District 5
 Commissioner Paul J. Krause, District 6
 Commissioner Willis E. Branning, District 7

Also in attendance were:

Brandt Richardson, County Administrator
 Lynn Thompson, Division Director
 Jay Stassen, Assistant County Attorney
 Jeanne Nash Hoffmann, Administrative Coordinator

2. INTRODUCTION OF NEW STAFF

There was no new staff to introduce this month.

3. AUDIENCE

Chair Krause asked if anyone in the audience wished to address the Committee on an item not on the agenda or if anyone wished to discuss an item on the Consent Agenda. No one came forward.

4. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

Motion by Commissioner Schouweiler, Second by Commissioner Workman, and passed on a 7-0 to approve the agenda as presented on July 27, 2010 with the change that 6.3 would be taken first.

5. CONSENT/INFORMATION AGENDA

Motion by Commissioner Egan, Second by Commissioner Gaylord, and passed on a 7-0 vote to approve the consent agenda.

5.1 – Minutes Of The June 15, 2010 Meeting

5.2 – Process For Selecting New Farmland Protection Projects

This was an information item only; no action was requested.

5.3 –Plat Commission Update – This was an information item; no action was requested.

6. REGULAR AGENDA

6.1 – Adopt Recommendations For County Project 97-85 Regional Roadway System Visioning Study

Transportation Program Engineer Brian Sorenson briefed the Committee on the findings from the Regional Roadway System Visioning Study and responded to questions. Brian was thanked by Committee members for creating collaboration among the partners. They stated that Brian added a level of credibility to the study. Jill Smith, a member of the Metropolitan Transportation Advisory Board, Dakota County Parks and Recreation Committee, and past member of the Mendota Heights Council addressed the Committee. She voiced the concern of a neighborhood group involved in the process to not over-build but to let development dictate when improvements were needed. She also requested that the County make partners aware of the response from the Federal Highway Administration regarding the interchange warrant analysis that Mn/DOT submitted to the Federal Highway Administration regarding the new interchange on I-494.

Motion by Commissioner Egan, Second by Commissioner Schouweiler, and passed on a 7-0 vote to recommend that the County Board adopt the following resolution:

WHEREAS, to promote safe and efficient transportation throughout the County and region, Dakota County partnered with the Minnesota Department of Transportation (Mn/DOT), the Metropolitan Council, the Federal Highway Administration, and the Cities of Eagan, Inver Grove Heights, Mendota Heights, and Sunfish Lake and is the lead agency for County Project (CP) 97-85, Regional Roadway System Visioning Study; and

WHEREAS, the study included investigation of potential future transportation system needs in northern Dakota County to develop a vision for the transportation system that will result in safe and efficient travel in the area as cost-effectively as possible, while at the same time recognizing agency land use development objectives; and

WHEREAS, the Cities of Eagan and Inver Grove Heights have planned for continued growth and development through their 2030 Comprehensive Plans that will result in additional impacts to the area transportation system; and

WHEREAS, continued growth in surrounding communities will result in additional impacts to the area transportation system; and

WHEREAS, representatives of Dakota County, Mn/DOT, the Metropolitan Council, Federal Highway Administration, and the cities of Mendota Heights, Sunfish Lake, Eagan, and Inver Grove Heights, have participated as members of a Study Advisory Committee and have reviewed study findings and recommendations; and

WHEREAS, the study process involved the public through public open houses, neighborhood meetings, and city council meetings; and

WHEREAS, they study recommends a Regional Roadway System Vision to support future growth in the in the area in a way that will result in a safe and efficient system of City, County, State, and Federal roadways in the future; and

WHEREAS, the County recognizes there are additional steps necessary to gain necessary agency approvals before the improvements included in the recommendations can be constructed; and

WHEREAS, the Dakota County Engineer recommends adoption of the recommendations for County Project 97-85, Regional Roadway System Visioning Study.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, That the Dakota County Board of Commissioners hereby adopts the study recommendations for County Project 97-85, the Regional Roadway System Visioning Study, as presented to the Physical Development Committee of the Whole on July 27, 2010.

6.2 – Selection Of Alignment For Mississippi River Regional Trail Central Segment In Inver Grove Heights

Parks Facility Development and Natural Resources Manager Bruce Blair, and Parks and Open Space Director Steve Sullivan briefed this item and responded to questions regarding the great trail experience Option C-2 provides while incorporating an alternative that the public will embrace. This project needs to be ready for bid by March 31, 2011 to meet the deadline of the grant. Under public comments, Bill Klein appeared to stress the great opportunity this provided the citizens of Inver Grove Heights.

Motion by Commissioner Schouweiler, Second by Commissioner Workman, and passed on a 7-0 vote to recommend that the County Board adopt the following resolution that incorporates Option C2 – Park Lake Alignment with Contingency (with Trestle Modification).

WHEREAS, by Resolution No. 99-526 (September 21, 1999), the Dakota County Board of Commissioners adopted the draft Mississippi River Regional Trail (MRRT) Development Plan; and

WHEREAS, the MRRT central segment is located from the intersection of Cahill Avenue and New Concord Boulevard in Inver Grove Heights (City), then south to the Pine Bend Bluffs State Natural Area and requires selection of the preferred alignment; and

WHEREAS, by Resolution No. 08-617 (December 16, 2008), the County Board authorized a contract with Toltz, Duvall, Anderson, And Associates, Inc. (TKDA), for design and engineering services of the MRRT central segment; and

WHEREAS, during 2009 and 2010, County staff engaged City staff and affected landowners regarding alignment alternatives and design considerations; and

WHEREAS, this process resulted in two alignments: A- East Alignment and B- West Alignment; and

WHEREAS, on July 21, 2009 (Resolution No. 09-367), the County Board authorized a contract amendment with TKDA for additional study of these alignments; and

WHEREAS, at a May 19, 2010 open house, the public identified a new alignment: Park Lake Alignment; and

WHEREAS, on June 22, 2010 (Resolution No. 10-344), the County Board authorized a contract amendment with TKDA for study of the Park Lake Alignment; and

WHEREAS, the Park Lake Alignment was found to be generally feasible, and includes two options: C1 (includes a road crossing near the railroad trestle) and C2 (eliminates two road crossings via modification of the trestle); and

WHEREAS, option C2 is dependent upon railroad approval, additional engineering and cost assessment which is undetermined at this time; and

WHEREAS, the A- East, B- West, and the C1/C2- Park Lake Alignments were reviewed by the Inver Grove Heights Park and Recreation Commission on July 14, 2010; and

WHEREAS, on July 14, 2010, the Inver Grove Heights Park and Recreation Commission passed a motion recommending that Dakota County choose either the C1 or C2 Park Lake Alignments, and aggressively pursue the C2 option, and also identified the A- East Alignment as the second preferred alignment; and

WHEREAS, staff prefers Park Lake Alignment option C2 if it is found feasible, within approved project budget and receives timely railroad approval; if option C2 is not achievable, staff then recommends Park Lake Alignment option C1; and

WHEREAS, once a trail alignment has been approved by both the County Board and the City of Inver Grove Heights, staff will return to the County Board and seek authorization for a contract amendment with TKDA to allow for preparation of final construction documents; and

WHEREAS, the Parks and Open Space Capital Improvement Program includes project funding of \$1,132,000 derived from a federal grant of \$772,800 and County funds of \$360,000; and

WHEREAS, the approved project budget is sufficient based on the estimated engineering, construction and acquisition costs associated with MRRT Central including alternative alignments A, B and C1 (with option C2 fiscal feasibility undetermined at this time).

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, That the Dakota County Board of Commissioners hereby conditionally approves the preferred MRRT Central segment option C2- Park Lake Alignment based on the following: from the intersection of New Concord Boulevard and Cahill Avenue in Inver Grove Heights southerly on the west side of

Cahill Avenue to Inver Grove Trail, then southerly on the west side of Inver Grove Trail, passing beneath the railroad trestle then southwesterly between Park Lake and the Union Pacific Railroad right-of-way, to near State Highway 52, then southerly and parallel to State Highway 52 to the first appropriate Inver Grove Trail crossing location to the existing MRRT; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That, if the preferred C-2 Park Lake Alignment is determined not feasible, exceeds approved project budget or doesn't receive timely railroad approval, the Dakota County Board of Commissioners hereby approves as a preferred contingency the MRRT Central segment C1- Park Lake Alignment based on the following: from the intersection of New Concord Boulevard and Cahill Avenue in Inver Grove Heights southerly on the west side of Cahill Avenue to Inver Grove Trail, then southerly on the west side of Inver Grove Trail, then crossing to the east side of Inver Grove Trail in the vicinity of the Pine Bend Elementary School, then southerly on the east side of Inver Grove Trail to approximately 100th Street, then crossing Inver Grove Trail, then southwesterly between Park Lake and the Union Pacific Railroad right-of-way, to near State Highway 52, then southerly and parallel to State Highway 52 to the first appropriate Inver Grove Trail crossing location to the existing MRRT; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That the Dakota County Board of Commissioners hereby directs staff to request from Inver Grove Heights approval of the use of City right-of-way for the preferred trail alignment.

6.3 – Update on Property Assessed Clean Energy Program

Environment and Natural Resource Director Michelle Beeman addressed the Committee along with Senator John Doll, sponsor of the Property Assessed Clean Energy enabling legislation. They briefed the Committee on the key legislative requirements for a PACE program, benefits stated by PACE proponents, limitations and concerns raised regarding PACE, and policy considerations. They responded to questions concerning the capturing of administrative costs, possible legislation to satisfy mortgage lenders concerns, and the requirement of using licensed vendors for energy improvements. CDA Director Mark Ulfers addressed the Committee and explained the CDA weatherization program and home remodeling loans.

The intent of the item was to provide the information to the Committee on the PACE Program. No action was requested.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Physical Development Division Director Lynn Thompson presented her update. Under the update for the UMore Gravel and Mining EIS, staff was directed to ensure that the Mississippi and Vermillion River watersheds were protected.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Commissioner Harris, Second by Commissioner Workman, and passed on a unanimous voice vote to adjourn the meeting at 12:23 p.m.

Respectfully submitted:



Jeanne Nash Hoffmann
Administrative Coordinator